Clue Given in Cuban Missile Crisis

NEW YORK, Feb. 4 (AP)—One of the last missing clues in the Cuban missile crisis has been disclosed with the publication of an emotional, rambling letter from former Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev.

The letter to the late President Kennedy had been left out of previous accounts of the 1962 missile confrontation.

In it, Khrushchev implied that Premier Fidel Castro would demobilize the missile force in exchange for a no-invasion pledge.

The letter, which led to ending the U.S.-Russian confrontation, is contained in "The Missile Crisis," by Elie Abel, chief of the London bureau of the National Broadcasting Co. At that time, he was NBC's diplomatic correspondent in Washington.

The book is published by J. B. Lippincott Co. of Philadelphia.

Abel said that Khrushchev's letter suggested that Mr. Kennedy issue a no-invasion pledge and recall the American fleet guarding the seas around Cuba.

The letter, quoted Abel, concludes:

"If you have not lost your self-control, and sensibly conceive what this might lead to, then, Mr. President, we and you ought not now to pull on the ends of the rope in which you have tied the knot of war, because the more we pull, the tighter the knot will be tied. And a moment may come when the knot will be tied so tight that even he who tied it will not have the strength to untie it, and then it will be necessary to cut that knot; and what that would mean is not for me to explain to you, because you yourself understand perfectly of what terrible forces our countries dispose.

"Consequently, if there is no intention to tighten that knot and thereby doom the world to catastrophe of thermonuclear war, then let us not only relax the forces pulling on the ends of the rope, let us take measures to untie that knot. We (the leaders of the Soviet Union) are ready for this."

The letter was received in Washington the night of Oct. 26, 1962.

[Another Khrushchev letter, made public by the Moscow radio the following morning, demanded that U.S. missiles be removed from Turkey in exchange for withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba. But the President, acting on the suggestion of his brother Robert, chose to ignore the second letter and replied to the first.]